

WEST LAFAYETTE POLICE MERIT COMMISSION MINUTES
April 12, 2010

The West Lafayette Police Merit Commission met in regular session in the Lower Level Conference Room of City Hall on April 12, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.

Police Merit Commission President Leverenz called the meeting to order and presided.

PRESENT: Commissioners Corrigan, Kirkpatrick, Leverenz, Sutor, and Troyer.

ALSO PRESENT: Commission Counsel Brooks; Police Chief Dombkowski, and Dr. James LeBreton, Associate Professor, Department of Psychological Sciences, Purdue University.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Troyer moved approval of the minutes of the March 8, 2010, meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sutor. Commission President Leverenz announced that the minutes were approved as distributed.

OLD BUSINESS

Commission President Leverenz reported that Dr. James LeBreton provided a status report of his activities regarding the promotional exams, the item banks, and the study guides.

There was discussion about who would maintain the item bank. Since the exam will be given once a year, Dr. LeBreton suggested that it be a different exam each time. Mr. Brooks suggested that there could be two exams for each level, alternating each. Dr. LeBreton said the review before the exams, then, would be to determine if there were modifications to Criminal Code, the Rules & Regulations, or the SOP. So long as there is only one exam at each level each year and there are not new exams each time, Dr. LeBreton stated that he could continue to maintain the item bank. Commission President Leverenz stated that the PMC Rules & Regulations reflect that the exams will be given at least annually, with the results valid for two years. Chief Dombkowski thanked Dr. LeBreton and his staff for the large amount of work to develop the item banks and the study guides. The Chief said that his staff feel that this is an improved product to evaluate the staff for promotions. Captain Leroux has not distributed the study guides yet, pending the Commission's decision about dates for the exams.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick asked if the questions and correct answers were in the study guide. Dr. LeBreton answered that none of the questions or answers are specifically identified in the study guide; only the sections of the Criminal Code, the PMC Rules & Regulations, and the WLPD SOP those taking the tests need to be familiar with. The primary source documents—the Criminal Code, the Rules & Regulations, and the WLPD SOP—would have the detail. The questions are factual, not opinions or judgments. The questions do not have any bias or discrimination. Dr. LeBreton mentioned that a few questions were developed solely for the captains' exams. For captains' exams, 25% of the questions come from Criminal Code, and 75% is from SOP and Rules & Regulations. There are 60 questions on each exam, regardless of level.

There was discussion about the questions on promotional exams, and how can the Board equate the scores from one round of tests to another round, and the impact of that on the eligibility list. Dr. LeBreton stated that, because of the small numbers of people involved, the only way to equate would be based on test content. For example, if one test has a question about a topic, the next test should have a question about the same topic. Commissioner

Kirkpatrick stated that the test should be changed every year, as the test bank has sufficient items, and that the questions could be matched. Commissioner Suitor suggested that the test effects are less compromising and more defensible when the same items are used on each test, when there is a small pool. Commission President Leverenz stated that a decision does not have to be made until next year, until at least one testing round has been done.

Police Chief Dombkowski reported that there are 31 individuals eligible to take the sergeant's exam, if they all have the years of service. There are seven merited sergeants, not all of whom are eligible to take the lieutenant's exam. There are six lieutenants, not all of whom are eligible to take the captain's exam. The Chief added that there are four merited captains, three of whom are eligible for retirement now, and about half of the lieutenants are eligible for retirement.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick questioned whether the eligibility lists should be created closer to the time when openings occur; she would support this action. Commission President Leverenz responded that the last time the exams were given and promotion eligibility lists were created was in May 2008 (the 2009 testing was deferred), so the lists are expiring soon. At the present time, there is only one candidate on the lieutenants' list, none on the captains' list, and only six on the sergeants' list. Commission President Leverenz said that a captain's test has never been given, and that at least sergeant's and lieutenant's exams should be given, regardless of whether there are vacancies in those ranks.

Commissioner Troyer moved that the Police Merit Commission give all three exams—the sergeant's, the lieutenant's, and the captain's—in the month of June, date to be determined. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kirkpatrick. By voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Commission President Leverenz explained that individuals who wish to take an exam register through Human Resources Director Foster. The Commission will administer the exams and grade them.

Commission Counsel Brooks asked which evaluations would be used, since appraisals are made in July; when the exams were given in February, the month prior (January) evaluation was the most recent. Commission President Leverenz responded that the test would be given in June; the evaluations for July 2010 and the prior three appraisals would be used; the interviews would be conducted in July and August; and the years of service calculated. The eligibility lists would be compiled in July or August, when the interviews are completed.

Dates for the tests were set by the Commission, with the captain's exam on June 5 at 10:00 a.m., and the sergeant's and lieutenant's exams on June 17 at 10:00 a.m. Commissioners Corrigan and Kirkpatrick will administer the exams, and Commissioner Troyer will grade the exams.

Dates for the interviews will be set later.

Commission President Leverenz thanked Dr. LeBreton and his staff for their work. After Dr. LeBreton left, Commission President Leverenz suggested that Dr. LeBreton's staff receive certificates of appreciation from the Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Police Chief Dombkowski provided copies of the Department's March report.

B. Commission President Leverenz distributed the 2010 meeting schedule, contact information for the Commissioners, and a roster of members and their terms. He suggested that he may cancel the May meeting, if there are no critical matters to review.

C. Commission President Leverenz reported that he and Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes encumbered funds from 2009 for paying Dr. LeBreton this year.

D. Commissioner Suitor announced that July 12 will be her last meeting. She will submit her formal resignation to the Mayor.

ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

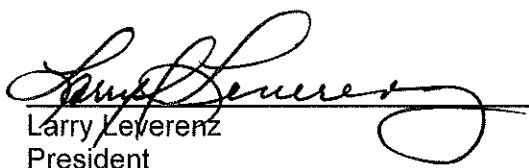
None.

NEXT MEETING

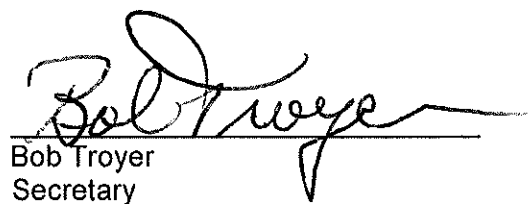
May 10, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. [The May 10 meeting was cancelled.]

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Troyer moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Corrigan. Commission President Leverenz adjourned the meeting, the time being 8:20 p.m.



Larry Leverenz
President



Bob Troyer
Secretary